

THE
C A S E
O F
A U T H O R S
B Y
P R O F E S S I O N O R T R A D E,
S T A T E D;
W I T H R E G A R D T O
B O O K S E L L E R S, t h e S T A G E, a n d t h e P U B L I C.

By JAMES RALPH, Esq;



Il ne s'agit pas de faire lire, mais de faire penser.

L'ESPRIT DES LOIX.



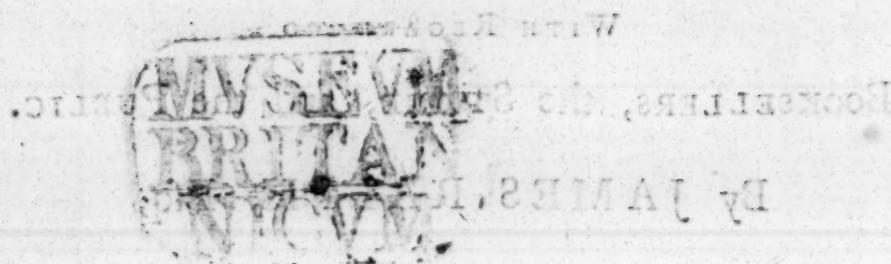
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PROFESSION OF TRADE
STATING



1850



To the F E W.

TWO Words, Au Roy, is the Address of every Subject of France to his Sovereign.—Three serve for You—Those stand for Power—These for Excellency—Excellency to which the Herald can make no Addition—Essences are superior to Forms, tho' the World is so made, that Forms govern it—But then Forms are satisfy'd with Forms; and if we bow the Knee to Majorities, our Hearts are at Liberty to bestow themselves.

Not to weary you with Words, this Tract compos'd for your Approbation only, is submitted to your Candour, and beseeches your Protection, which it may, possibly, stand in need of.

I am, &c.

THE AUTHOR.

W E H o T

ADVERTISEMENT.

IF any Section of the following Treatise should be thought worthy of a Place in our monthly, weekly, or other Collections, the Author of it makes it his humble Request to the Gentlemen concerned in compiling and composing them, that they would suffer it to answer *his* Purpose first.



THE
C A S E, &c.

HERE is hardly a Page in the
Annals of the World which does not
seem to shew, That Wit and Money
have been always at War, and always
treated one another with reciprocal Contempt.

Perhaps for this only Reason, That the Man
of Money could acquire every thing but Ideas,
and the Man of Wits Ideas could never acquire
him Money.

But, whatever the Cause may be, such is the
Fact: And, as if the Bulk of Mankind de-
rived some Kind of Gratification from the
Quarrel, they have each in his Way contributed
all they could to render it perpetual.

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Thus

Thus a Man may plead for Money, prescribe or quack for Money, preach and pray for Money, marry for Money, fight for Money, do any thing within the Law for Money, provided the Expedient answers, without any the least Imputation.

But if he writes like one inspired from Heaven, and writes for Money, the Man of *Touch*, in the Right of *Midas* his great Ancestor, enters his Caveat against him as a Man of *Taste*; declares the two Provinces to be incompatible; that he who aims at Praise ought to be starved; and that there ought to be so much draw-back upon Character for every Acquisition in Coin.

In this, as in many other Instances, the Rump of the World serves as an Oracle to the Head. — A rich Mans * * * * is better received than another Mans Jest; and a Stink so recommended becomes a Law.

And yet the Art of Writing is as much an Art, as the Art of Painting or the Art of War: The Pen, as a Tool, is of as much Importance, at least, as the Pencil; and as a Weapon offensive or defensive, has its Power, and can do some Sort of Execution as well as a Sword.

Some

Some Branches of this Art require Abilities and Accomplishments of the first Rate—Such Accomplishments and Abilities are the Patents of *God Almighty* for Place and Precedency; and after Those on whom they are bestowed have mellowed a due Time in their Graves, the Privilege of them is allow'd.—Till then, indeed, the Kings Patents, by universal Connivance are preferred; because there is nothing we are so unwilling to acknowledge, as a Superiority of Nature; because Titles or Pretences to Honour are many ways attainable; and because we are glad to avail ourselves of any Palliative to countenance the servile Homage we are apt to pay to Those possess'd of them.

If Heroes and Patriots constitute the first Column of national Glory, Authors of Genius constitute the second: And if *England* has produced a *Sackville*, a *Bacon*, a *Raleigh*, a *Greville*, a *Selden*, a *Harrington*, a *Hyde*, a *Sidney*, first and second, a *Villiers*, a *Saville*, a *Sheffield*, an *Ashley-Cooper*, a *Boyle*, a *Granville*, &c. who did not write for Bread, it has also produced other Writers * as

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eminent,

* Mr. *Oldmixon*, perhaps, will not be admitted as one of these; and yet his Merits as a Party-Writer, his Connections with the fam'd *Professor of Politics* and *Philanthropy* of *Pall-Mall*, and his submitting to labour at the Prefs like a Horse in a Mill, till he became as blind and as wretched, ought to have been, what they were not, so many Preservatives from the Accu-

eminent, who did ; and of whom some, to the eternal Disgrace of all our national Pretensions to Generosity and Humanity, dy'd for want of it.

We call the Sciences liberal, 'tis true ; but then, 'tis as true, there is not one liberal amongst them : All are carry'd to Market ; and some not only fetch a very good Price in ready Money, but are farther rewarded with Titles, Dignities, Employments and Revenues.

And the Thing speaks for itself : A poetical Canto ; a Demonstration worthy of *Euclid* ;—An historical Section—A Tract on Government—A Discourse on Morals—A Persuasive to Holiness, &c. till converted into Money, will not furnish any one Accommodation : And in a Country of Riches and Luxury like this, where both Pleasure and Importance are measur'd by Expence,

Accumulation of Miseries which befel him in his old Age, when he stood most in need of Consolation.

But Mr. *Sale*, Translator of the *Koran*, and Author of the *Oriental Articles* in the *Universal History*, might be compared to the *Phœnix* in all but this, That he did not leave a Successor behind him ; and yet such were his Distresses, that he often wanted a second Shirt, and was often obliged to the first Friend he could find for the Meal of the Day. How different his Fate from that of a certain Prelate deceas'd, who, on the Credit of a *single Sermon*, (for tho' he printed *two*, the last was but a Hash of the first) had the good Luck to become the Head of his Order ?

Money

Money enough must be had to furnish Vanities as well as Necessaries. The more we abound in Vanities, the more considerable we are esteemed: And where any Necessary is wanting, apparently thro' Necessity, all the Douceurs of Life arising from Observance and Respect, will be wanting too.

If, for Illustration, we had a *Shakspeare*, a *Milton*, or a *Newton* now existing amongst us, who should come into what is *call'd* good Company in dirty Linen, for *want* of clean—And a *Charters*, a *Lascel*, a *Lowther*, a *Walters*, or a *Crafft*, out of Sordidness did the same, merely to save the *Charge* of washing, the latter would be courted and caressed, and the former would hardly be acknowledged — The most notorious Abuse of Wealth not being able to render the Abuser contemptible, or Talents the most sublime to render Poverty otherwise.

Even the poor Lord, poor Hero, poor Saint amongst us, (if we had any of the two latter Classes amongst us,) could no more preserve themselves from Contempt, than the poor Poet, Historian, Philosopher, or Divine.

And this we ought in Charity to suppose, is the Cause, that neither *God* or the *King* is ever served in Employments the most honorable and

and venerable, even by Persons of the first Families and most unblemished Sanctity, for naught.

Politically speaking, however, I am of Opinion, that Wealth should be intitled to some Degree of Respect; and, on the contrary, that Want should be subject to some Degree of Disgrace. The Reason this: Wealth is the Object of Commerce; Commerce is one great Source of our national Efficiency; and when political and philosophical Maxims clash, Prudence requires the latter should give way to the former.

But then Wealth may be valued too high, as it is said, Gold may be bought too dear. Or, if there is no such Worth, indeed, as Moneys Worth, we should be consistent in our Decisions at least; in which Case it would follow; That, instead of censuring an Author for taking Money for his Works, we ought to esteem Those most who get most Money by them: And then *Pope*, and *Voltaire* after his Example, would deserve to be considered more, for what they *made* of their Works, than for the Works themselves.

The Voluntier, or Gentleman-Writer, may be content with the Point of Honour, and make a Compliment of the Profit to his Bookseller if he

he pleases : But were the Writer by Profession to do the same, I am afraid Those who now disparage him on the Score of Venality, would discover the same good Nature, in endeavouring to disparage him as much for his Folly.

Besides ; Let the Bookseller come by his Copy how he may, by Purchase or Donation, the Market-Price of the Book is always the same. — The Compliment, such as it was, he would tell you, was paid to him, not to the Public : And that he had allowed in the Difference of Paper and Print, an Equivalent for the Pittance usually given to the Author.

One would think, therefore, that, whether an Author was an Adventurer for Fame or Money, or both, it should be all a Case to the candid Reader ; and that the Rate of Authorship should be fixed by the real Weight and Value of the Work, independent of all other Considerations.

Every Body knows there can be no Action without some Motive ; and that every Motive which arises from ourselves, is apt to terminate in ourselves : Now Love of Fame or Importance of any kind, is a Motive as selfish as any other. — As many have abused their Talents out of Vanity, Wantonness or Wickedness, as out of Necessity ; and a Man who writes to live, may

set

set as high a Value on Character, as he that writes to make one:

Difference of Motive in this Case, then, makes no Difference in Merit or Demerit. — That Society is best formed where Selfishness of every kind centers in the good of the Whole. — And the Writer who serves himself and the Public together, has as good a Right to the Product in Money of his Abilities, as the Landholder to his Rent, or the Money-Jobber to his Interest.

Nor is this all. — Supposing the Writer by Trade, and the Voluntier, to have equal Abilities and equal Accomplishments, the former, as the Current of the Times now sets, has the best Chance to be the best Writer of the Two.

And first I make a Difference in Times, for this Reason. — *Bacon, &c.* were always in Action ; and when out of Place, had always the Pen in their Hands ; consequently were habitual Writers, or possessed of all the Advantages that a Habit of Writing could give them.

But the Voluntier-Writers of our Times are Holiday-Writers indeed. — That is to say, — They write just enough to shew They can read ; and, having so done, throw away the Pen. — Whereas, by the very Malice of his Stars, the Writer by

by Trade is for ever obliged to write on ; and thereby obtains that Mastery in Matter, Method, Stile and Manner, which is hardly to be obtained any other Way.

There is indeed a Species of Venality which can no otherwise be palliated, than by the famous Maxim of a late famous State-Casuist, “ That he is a Fool who is a Grain honester than the * Times he lives in.”

And, if we duly consider the Biass given to our political OEconomy, even before he came to be at the Head of the College, and the Habits gradually established upon it, it will be no easy Matter to render the Charge special against any body.

Venality from that Period came as much into Vogue as Gravitation : All Things were founded upon it : All Things were resolved into it : All Things were accounted for by it : And one of the most venerable Personages amongst us,

* It follows, no doubt, That in *better* Times no Quarter ought to be given to it ; nor to such a Wretch as Doctor *Madera* at *any* time ; who, having first prostituted his Pen in the Cause of the Church, by defending certain indefensible Manuscripts, Relicts, &c. was infamously employ'd by *Philip IV.* to explain away the fundamental Rights and Privileges of the *Arragonians*, which he had sworn at his Coronation to maintain and defend, and thereby justify that Tyrant's cruel Extinction of them.

was induc'd to consecrate it, as the only universal Expedient that could be rely'd upon for the Service of all future Ages.

In short: Has not the same Recipe serv'd in a Manner for us all? Have not our Dispensaries, public and private, been forc'd to conform to it? Is not the contagious Matter like that of the Small-Pox for Inoculation, lodged in every Borough and Body-Corporate thorough the Kingdom? Are there not known Practitioners in Abundance, who, by the Dint of applying, directing, and modifying it, not only have their Living, but their Choice of Living, thriving, fattening, in the very best Employments in the Kingdom? — And has not this Practice obtain'd so long, and gathered such Strength, that the wifest and best of Men scarce know how to put a Stop to it?

More than all This. — Has it not given Rise to another Principle yet more execrable and pernicious; because partaking as much of the *Hussar*, as that did of the *Swiss*? Rapacity! Rapacity, which, instead of chaffering and bartering, so much Service for so much Emolument, insists on so much Emolument without any Service at all? And, as in the former Case, do we not see it force such Compliances, as almost excites an Apprehension, That Government itself will in the End be torn to Pieces like *Ateon* by his own Dogs? And

“ And why, says the late Mr. *Fielding*,
 “ in one of his *Jacobite-Journals*, is an Author,
 “ (in a Country where there is no public Provi-
 “ sion for Men of Genius) obliged to be a more
 “ disinterested Patriot than any other ? And
 “ why is he, whose Livelihood is in his Pen, a
 “ greater Monster in using it to serve himself,
 “ than he who uses his Tongue for the same
 “ Purpose ? ”

It became, indeed, but too apparent, That Genius and Knowledge were worth nothing, no not even Countenance or Notice, till grafted on some factious Stock, and made subservient to some seperate Interest: That it was downright Folly to hope to rise by disinterested Merit: And that he was only laughed at, who laid the Stress of his Suit on any such Pretensions.

Nay one Instance may be given of a Gentleman of the old Stamp, who, finding himself obliged to run counter to the Times, by acknowledging Scruple of Conscience, Attachment to Principle, Concern for Character, Affection for the Public, and Reverence for the Dignity of Government, thought himself also oblig'd to look round for such Considerations, as bad fairest to warrant his Discretion, palliate his Singularity, and skreen him from the Resentments of the Herd, by his purer Example exposed and condemn'd.

Even on this Head, therefore, the Writer by Trade might insconce himself behind his Betters, and plead their Authority for doing That out of Necessity, which they do wantonly, out of the Rage of adding Luxury to Luxury, and Vanity to Vanity ; Which, as above-mention'd, is become the only Ambition of us all, from the first Grandee down to the lowest Mechanic.

The Misfortune is, that Men of all Ranks and Conditions are apt to make use of their Faculties as they make use of their Money, for their *own* Accommodation only ; and are never so much offended as when you attempt to turn the Powers of them upon themselves.

There is, therefore, no such Thing as prevailing with the mercenary V - - - - r to be just to you, for the same Reason that he is partial to himself: No, what is Privilege within the Bar, is Trespass in the Lobby : And I have known one of These gravely wonder, that any Writer should have the Impudence to make the same Use of his Pen, that he did of his Borough.

But (leaving These in their Sins) what is most provoking of all, the very Press itself has been made to furnish the Reproaches of which these Censors so roundly avail themselves ; and the most interested of Writers, are of all others the most free in bestowing them : I mean such, as, with

with an Eye to Preferment, officiously strain all their Powers and Faculties to make the People appear sole Authors of their own Calamities.

These are amphibious Things ; half 'Squire, half Author, who, from a strong Presumption of Parts, despise the Ignorants above them, and as vain a Presumption of Patrimony, despise the Indigents below them ; or else, Party per-Pales of another Species, among whom Benefice stands for Patrimony ; and from whence they look down on a poor Pen-and-Ink Laborer, with the same Eye of Disdain that they look down on their own poor Curates.

The last Offender of this Sort, is the egregious Author of a late *chef-d'oeuvre*, which, under the Title of an * *Estimate*, &c. takes Possession of the Press, as if, like Sir *Thomas Lombe* twisting Mill, it was a Machine, which none but he and Company, were in the Secret of managing, or had any legitimate Pretence to occupy.

According to him, the whole Herd of Writers, (with an Exception to himself, and Those he pleases to except*besides) are profligate Scribblers, insipid or malignant Scribblers, aspiring or

* Being a modest Attempt to prove, that the Character of *Fribble* in the *Farce*, is our *Representative-General* ; or in other Words, That our *National Effeminacy* is the Source of all our Miscarriages and Misfortunes ; of which *Effeminacy*, however, no better Proof is to be met with, than the Reception given to this Tinsil Performance.

despairing Scribblers, who write to find their *Account* in Writing ; and such is the *general Defect of Taste and Learning*, that we are to understand, *Sodom* itself was hardly in a more desperate State than is now the Republic of Letters.

Indeed, the good Men and true, requir'd by way of Composition for *Sodom*, could not be found : Whereas, on *our Behalf*, the Worthies kept in Reserve from the Blast he had before breathed out upon the Age, are such as have Merit enough to atone for all the Barbarism of all the *Goths* and *Vandals*, still extant in *Europe*.

One of these, a very *Cæsar* it seems, both *Dictator* and *Pontifex Maximus* in Literature, he talks of, as the Spies sent by *Moses*, talk'd of the Children of *Anak* : Believing, or affecting to believe, himself to be but a Grass-hopper before him, he presumes, that he, this *Unic*, must, therefore appear in the same stupendous Magnitude to every body else.

Thus, in the Phrase of *Shakspeare*, he likens him to a *Colossus* striding the narrow World, with a Swarm of *us petty Men* crawling between his huge Legs : And in his own, to *Gulliver*, maliciously attacked with poison'd Arrows, (because no otherwise to be subdued) by the whole Force of *Lilliput*.

A *Prodigy* every way ! And such he must certainly be allowed (*ne sævi magne sacerdos !*) by all who have had the Pleasure of reading his *prodigious Tract upon Prodigies*, now only to be met with in the Collections of the Curious.

Another of his *Elegies* (whether as Author, Player, Manager, or all Three, is uncertain) *Jacob Behmen* or *Lord Flame* himself, could not have celebrated more emphatically than he has done in the following extraordinary Climax. “Let us then search the Theatre for the *Remains* of “manly Taste : And here, *apparently at least*, it “must be *acknowledged*, we shall find it. A “great Genius hath arisen to *dignify* the Stage ; “who, when it was *sinking* into the *lowest Inspi-* “*dity*, restored it the *Fulness* of its *ancient Splen-* “*dor*, and with a Variety of Powers *beyond* “*Example*, establish’d *Nature*, *Shakespeare* and “*himself*.”

To *establish* his *own-self* also, as Successor to *Montesquieu*, he takes care to be his own Index in every Page and every Paragraph : The Prince *Prettyman* of Writers is ever before our Eyes ; and every Reader finds himself obliged to acknowledge, no Title was ever so well bestow’d.

Lastly : On the Foot-stool of the State thus occupy’d by this illustrious *Triumvirate*, he has
con-

condescended to leave room for little *Hogarth*; in what way and for what purpose we shall see presently.

Common Sense, (which it is Pity we are not all of us better acquainted with) is the familiar Standard of Conduct in common Life: And if in common Life we should hear any Man take upon him to dispense such indiscriminate Censures on one hand, and such absurd Flatteries on the other, what should we think of his Manners, Conduct or Discretion? Should not we be more in Pain for Those so flatter'd, than Those so censur'd? And if it were possible to conceive the Former had an Appetite for such loathsome Food, should not we be more apt to compliment them upon their *Digestion* than upon their *Taste*?

It is happy for Mr. *Hogarth*, in my humble Opinion, that he is brought upon the Stage in such Company, rather for the sake of fastening some additional Abuse upon the Public, than of bestowing any special Grace upon him. "Neither the comic Pencil, nor the serious Pen of our ingenious Countrymen (so the *Existimator* or Appraiser's gracious Patent of Allowance runs) have been able to keep alive the Taste of Nature or of Beauty." For where he

he has chosen to be a Niggard of his Acknowledgments, every other Man would chuse to be a Prodigal: Nature had play'd the *Proteus* with us; had invited us to persue her in every Shape, but had never suffered us to overtake her: Beauty all had been smitten with, but no-body had been able to assign us a Rule by which it might be defin'd: This was Mr. Hogarth's Task: This is what he has succeeded in: Composition is, at last, become a Science: The Student knows what he is in Search of: The Connoisseur what to praise: And Fancy and Fashion or Prescription, will usurp the hackney'd Name of Taste no more.

So that, whatever may be said in Disparagement of the Age on other Accounts, it has more Merit and Honour to claim on this, than any which preceded it: And I will venture for once to prophesy, from the Improvements already manifested, That we shall have the Arts of designing to value ourselves upon, when all our antient Virtues are worn out.

But we digress: The Author's Sin of Venality is the Point immediately before us: And, unhappily, the *Existimator* and Company, drive as hard a Bargain with the Public for their Works, as the veryest Mercenary who can be named.

D

Mr. Hogarth

Mr. Hogarth will tell you like an honest Man, That, till Fame appears to be worth more than Money, he will always prefer Money to Fame: Whoever casts an Eye on the *Existimators* scanty Page and over-grown Margin, will pronounce at once, That no-body understands the Value of Three Shillings and Six-pence better than he.

Even the great Genius of the Theatre (if common Fame is not always a common Liar,) is but an occasional Conformist in the Temple of *Apollo*, and never makes his Entrance into it, but as a Thoroughfare to that of *Plutus*.

And, to say nothing of the Two-Shilling-Antidotes to the Posthumous Writings of Lord Bolingbroke, a Page is still extant, where the Colossus himself creeps between the Legs of the late Sir Robert Sutton, in what Posture, or for what Purpose need not be explain'd.

This is enough to shew the Folly and Rashness of bringing a Charge, without considering how far it reaches, and who are comprehended in it: And if another Breath should still be wanting to disperse the officious Cloud of Incense, we found this *Idol* surrounded with, it may be supply'd out of the additional Sheet to

Jacksons

Jacksons Chronology, remaining to this Hour unanswered.

In short ; Where nothing is liberal, nothing ought to be liberal : And where all must pay, all ought to be paid. Notwithstanding which, Authors are still living, who have been as communicative of the Use of their Parts, as great Men ought to be of their Fortunes ; and who on those Occasions neither receiv'd, nor expected to receive, any other Reward, than the inward Satisfaction arising from the Consciousness of having done a Service, and thereby discharg'd a Duty.

But, instead of standing on the Defensive only against the Petulancy or Bitterness of such ungenerous Maligners, might not a Writer of this Class, if any such could be found, who had not only Vouchers to produce of Abilities, but also of Services resulting to the Public, by a proper and seasonable Exertion of them, take upon him to shew, without any Breach of Modesty, That he has more to complain of than to answer for ?

The Writer has three Provinces. To write for Booksellers. To write for the Stage. To write for a Faction in the Name of the Community.

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I do

I do not make Ministerial Service a Province ; because Service of that kind is at present rarely called for : Knowing the Price of Power to be Opposition and Abuse, Ministers are grown too prudent to offer those Pleas from Time to Time, which they are sure will not be admitted at the Bar of Prejudice : And when they do condescend to employ the Pen, they either take the first that comes to hand out of the public Offices, or else have Recourse to the Colleges : In which latter Case, the Church furnishes the Reward ; and in the former the State ; as Vacancies happen to fall and Pretensions can be accommodated.

And as to the Community, tho' sensible the Press is the only Engine left, by which they can act at all, either for the Relief of themselves or the Comfort of their Posterity ; and tho' ready enough to clamour for the Liberty of it, they have never once thought of taking it out of the Hands of Faction, and, by special Warrant, transferring it to some able Hand or Hands to be made use of, not for their Amusement, but their Service : Not to inflame their Resentments, but to bring their Grievances, if any, to a fair, full, and effectual Audit.

To write for the Booksellers is, more or less a Grievance, according as the Bargain can be driven ; but is always a Grievance, let the Bargain

Bargain be driven how it will for which, almost as much may be urg'd in justice to the Man of Craft, as against it, in Compassion to the Man of Ingenuity. Book-making is the Manufacture he must thrive by : The Rules of Trade oblige him to buy as cheap and sell as dear as possible : And it is, I am afraid, but too true, That in this kind of Traffic, almost as much Paper is wasted, as is sold. On the other hand, knowing best what Assortments of Wares will best suit the Market, he gives out his Orders accordingly ; and is as absolute in prescribing the Time of Publication, as in proportioning the Pay.

This will account in a good Degree for the Paroxysms of the Press : The sagacious Bookseller feels the Pulse of the Times, and according to the Stroke prescribes ; not to cure, but flatter the Disease : As long as the Patient continues to swallow, he continues to administer ; and on the first Symptom of a Nausea, he changes the Dose. Hence the Cessation of all Political Carminatives, and the Introduction of Cantharides, in the Shape of Tales, Novels, Romances, &c. And hence the sudden Change from a Course of Composers and Amusers, to a Course of State-Stimulatives of the most daring and dangerous kind.

Thus,

Thus, there is no Difference between the Writer in his Garret, and the Slave in the Mines ; but that the former has his Situation in the Air, and the latter in the Bowels of the Earth : Both have their Tasks assigned them alike : Both must drudge *and* starve ; and neither can hope for Deliverance. The Compiler must compile ; the Composer must compose on ; sick or well ; in Spirit or out ; whether furnish'd with Matter or not ; till, by the joint Pressure of Labour, Penury, and Sorrow, he has worn out his Parts, his Constitution, and all the little Stock of Reputation he had acquir'd among *the Trade* ; Who were All, perhaps, that ever heard of his Name.

The Humanity and Policy of the State have provided Hospitals for the Soldier and Seaman, worn out in the Service ; but the Writer has no such Consolation in Prospect : If the worshipful Company of Stationers have built and endowed any Alms-Houses, it is only, I presume, for the decayed and miserable of their own Corps : And, indeed, if they had made any Provision for the Reception of exhausted Authors amongst them, the Public, instead of allowing them so much Merit for so much Charity, might possibly have called it, a miserable Composition for an enormous Debt.

The

The Stage is the Creature of the Public, tho' the Administration of it is become a Perquisite of the Crown : The Stock of Wit and Genius it subsists upon, (if Managers will allow any Thing to be Stock, besides Cloaths and Scenes) was bequeath'd to the Public by the better Writers of better Times, who had little, very little, besides the Air of a Character in Reversion for their Reward : And that Stock so bequeathed, has not only been paid for a Thousand Times over and over, but is still paying for, and never so largely as at present, by the nightly Contributions of the Public.

Under the Care of Sir *William Davenant*, an Author, it grew into its present Form : It is to him we are indebted for our first regular Theatre; for Magnificence of Scenery, Improvement of Dress, Addition of musical Compositions, and the graceful Propriety of representing female Characters by female Performers.

Here, therefore, one would think every Man capable of contributing to the public Entertainment by his Pen, might repair with Assurance of being admitted to some occasional Share of the public Liberality.

But in truth, an Author has more Difficulties to struggle with in this Walk than in any other.

other. The dramatical Muse is the coyest of the Choir ; and yet as often stoops to a Coxcomb as any Woman of them all. To *Addison* she was a Prude ; she was a Wanton to *Cibber* ; And, in general, when least courted, is easiest won. To cohabit with her, is the only way to obtain a sure Ascendancy over her. It was by the Dint of perpetual Assiduity and Familiarity *Shakspeare*, *Johnson*, *Fletcher*, *Shirley*, *Maffinger*, *Dryden*, *Otway*, *Southern*, *Congreve*, *Vanbrug*, &c. obtain'd their several Degrees of Mastery. But in our Days, all Access to her is in a manner cut off. Those who have the Custody of the Stage claim also the Custody of the *Muse* ; and sit in Judgment on the Virility of the Suiter, before he is suffer'd to make his Effort : And having once pronounc'd him impotent, he is so to be esteem'd for ever. Hence the Sterility which has so long disgrac'd us ; and the obvious Inference, That if the same Rigour had been always practised, we never should have had any Stage at all.

It follows, That even the Bookseller is a perfect *Mæcenas* compar'd to the Manager. The Appetite of the Public for new Productions, must be annually indulg'd from the Press with a proper Quantity of Trash and Crudity ; and the Journeyman-Author, who supplies it, must consequently be paid, like other Journeymen, every Saturday Night.

Whereas

Whereas on the Stage, Exhibition stands in the Place of Composition : The *Manager*, whether *Player* or *Harlequin*, must be the sole Pivot on which the whole Machine is both to move and rest : There is no *draw-back* on the *Profit* of the Night in *old Plays* : and any *Access* of Reputation to a dead Author, carries no impertinent Claims and invidious Distinctions along with it.

Hence the Preparatives from Season to Season so artfully laid, to keep the Relish for these stale Performances alive ; as also to deaden every Wish for new ones ! — And hence that Variety of Practice on the Public, to make them ashamed of feeling, much more owning, That They are *weary of the Repetition* !

Add to all this ; That, if, by the very Caprice of the Times, some Diversification should become absolutely necessary, a Manager may either make use of his own Hand, or transfer the Jobb to the most pliant of his Followers, in bar of all other Pretenders : And if he can neither write or read, and has besides an insuperable Aversion to all that can, his Carpenter and Dancing-Master shall club for an Entertainment, to put Letters themselves out of Countenance.

•Tis true, Authors are as apt as other Men, to mistake their Talents, and over-rate their Performances ; and the Partizans of the Theatre (who, by one Device or another, are become a little Le-

E gion ;

gion ; all Choice-Spirits, and as well disciplined as the Troops of *Prussia!*) will hardly tell you, That *the one of a thousand* who deserves Encouragement, never fails to receive it.

Whence it should follow, That Infallibility, denied to the Church, and not pretended to in the State, is the sole Property of the Stage ; and that the present Managers are the only great Men our poor Country has left to boast of. But then, *Cibber* was Player, Writer, and Manager too ; and, over and above, a Bottle of as pert small Beer, as ever whizz'd in any Mans Face : Notwithstanding which, *Gay*, under his Dictatorship, was driven from *Drury-Lane* to *Lincolns-Inn-Fields* ; and, had it not been for an uncommon Confederacy of Men of Rank and Parts in support of his Pretensions, his excellent *Opera* (from whence *both* Houses have drawn such considerable Profits) had been rejected at *both* Houses alike.

So that Infallibility, if *now* lodg'd behind the Scenes, was not always lodg'd there : And as the Public has not always been so subject to Infatuation, as it seems to be at present, every such Instance of Over-Presumption, was, in those Days, suitably resented ; as this very *Corintbian* (so he was then called) often found to his Cost, tho' never to his Confusion.

And that *Shakspeare* the Father of the *English* Stage, never made any such bold Pretensions, is fairly deducible from every Record that remains concerning him—Having a Soul as noble as his Genius was comprehensive, he was equally superior to Vanity, Pevishness, Avarice and Envy — He could give Place to *Marlow*, as a better Performer than himself, on the Stage — He could take even *Johnson* by the Hand, without being shock'd by his Pride or aw'd by his Learning — He could leave his Works, like the Sybils Leaves, to provide for their own Immortality ; and in his last Will he could descend to call his Partners in Busines, his *Fellows* ; tho' Nature had never produced a Man, deserving that *levelling* Name.

To be quite explicit : I am as much an Admirer of Mr. *Garrick*, and his Excellencies, as I ought to be ; and I envy him no Part of his good Fortune — But then, tho' I am free to acknowledge he was made for the Stage, I cannot be brought to think, the Stage was made only for him ; or that the Fate of every dramatical Writer ought either to be at *his* Mercy, or *that* of any *other* Manager, whatsoever : And the single Consideration, That there is no Alternative but to fly from him, in case of any Contempt or Neglect, to Mr. *Rich*, is enough to deter any Man in his Senses, from imbarkeing a seconde Time on such a hopeless Voyage.

Power is what *all* covet, but *few* are fit to be trusted with ; and there is no Appendix to it so petty, but a Man may find Room enough to play the Tyrant in it : Not many Years ago we had a *Nabob* and a *black Hole of our own*, in a Parish Round-house : So that we might have wondered less than we did, at the Tyranny of the *Nabob* in *India*, since chastised by the gallant *Clive*.

In short, it needs no Proof, That he, who cannot stoop as low to a Manager of either House as to a Minister, who cannot submit as implicitly to his Commands, who cannot wait for Years in Expectation of the Honour of receiving them, or who does not, previously, cover himself against such a Mixture of *Cajoleries* and *Cruelties*, as he must, otherwise, encounter, under the Patronage and Protection of the Great (which is a Practice altogether unfair, as having a Tendency to make That the Prey of Influence, which ought to be the Reward of Merit only) had better, from the first, take Refuge even in *Grub-street*, and indent himself to be a *Garrettier* for ever.

And, if with the true *Non-Chalance* of the Indifferent, for all that is indifferent to them, my Reader should, here, half-yawning, interject, *Well, and what will the Public lose by such a Loss I beseech you?* The Answer follows,—Nothing ; in the present Course of theatrical Management—Nothing if the Stage has really reach'd Perfection.

fection.—If all the Faults, Follies and Misfortunes of Men, arising from bad Passions, bad Principles, and bad Examples have already been expos'd, in all the various Lights they can bear; if the Age is to slide away un-mark'd with any Improvement of its *own*, and we are only to be amused, not profited, by the Lessons and Amusements of our Forefathers.

But, If the great Use of the Stage is to be a Looking-Glass to the Times, and every Year produces its own Crop of Vice and Absurdity; if, hitherto, we have been so charmed, with the wild Luxuriancy of *Shakspeare*, that we have scarce attended to the more regular Productions of *Johnson* and *Congreve*; and if, in the Opinion of all *Europe*, our dramatical Taste remains as rude as ever, there is and will be growing Employment for all the Wit and Genius growing, or likely to grow amongst us; and the Public is every Way an Enemy to itself, for not demanding and insisting, on having it applied accordingly.

To write for a Faction in the Name of the Community is the most flattering of all these Provinces: But then, even This must be taken under certain Restrictions.

The Voluntier in this Service, if a tame, spiritless Inefficient, may be sure to meet with nothing

nothing but Contempt and Neglect ; and, if such a *Hotspur* in the Exercise of his Pen, as to bid Defiance to Discretion, the Power he so rashly provokes, may take what Vengeance it pleases on him : Instead of obtaining Assistance or Countenance, or even Compassion, he shall not only be disowned but villified, for having blasted the Cause he undertook to defend: And so much the more Trouble he has thus drawn upon himself, so much the more officious, Those he had so simply made his Court to, are apt to be, in giving themselves Airs of Candour, at the Expence of his Presumption.

The Voluntier, then, by a sufficient Manifestation of Intelligence, Principle, and the Art of improving every Hint that offers to the Service he undertakes, must be in Possession of the Public, before he can hope for such Connections and Confidence, as alone can put him in the Situation above described—And for a Man to raise himself out of Obscurity so as to become this Object of public Notice and public Favour, is so hard a Task, that a very few Instances will serve for half an Age.

It follows, that this Province can be but a very narrow one: And I call it the most flattering of all, because the Writer who fills it, is expected to do that without Doors, which his Confederates in a superior Station, find impracticable to do within ;

within; because he finds himself consulted and caressed by them on this Account; and because of the Assurances given him, That in the Division of the promised Land, a Lot shall be reserv'd for him.

While, therefore, these occasional Connections hold, while he is useful in collecting the Materials of Opposition, and in working up the whole Mass to a Head, Hope sweetens all his Labours, all his Difficulties, all his Discouragements, and he at least enjoys the Dream, of growing serviceable to himself and his Country together.

At last, the Time of Projection comes—
The Country is brought to groan for a Change
—The strongest Faction in the C—t takes
Advantage of the Cry, to displace the Weaker,
and to grow themselves stronger by slipping in a
sure Man or two of their own — All-sufficient
Patriots become insignificant Ministers.—Opp-
osition is at an End — The Pen is no longer of
any Use — And he that held it, is left, in the
Language of *Shakspeare*, *Like an unregarded Bul-
rush on the Stream torot itself with Motion.*

Poor * *Amburst!* after having beent e Drudge of his Party for the best Part of twenty Years together, was as much forgot in the famous Compromise of 1742, as if he had never been born! — And when he died of what is called a broken Heart, which happened within a few Months afterwards, became indebted to the Charity of his very Bookseller for a Grave. — A Grave not to be traced now, because then no otherwise to be distinguished, than by the Freshness of the Turf, borrowed from the next Common to cover it!

There is no Need for me to infer — Every considerate Reader, as well as every Author, will do it for me.

I do not, however, desire to carry this Accusation one Step higher than it ought to go: nor am I at all pleased with the Opportunity thrown in my Way, of making any such Accusation at all.

There have been Times, when the Talents of a good Writer were esteemed a sufficient Qualification for almost any Employment whatsoever, and when Room was left or made for their Admission.

* Mr. M--- his Fellow-labourer in another excellent Paper called *Common Sense*, by marrying a Woman of Fortune, was put into a Condition of laughing at the Ingratitude he also experienced on the same Occasion.

I do

I do not rank *Burnet* in the first Class of Authors, and yet it was not his Divinity which made him Bishop of *Salisbury*.

Somers, it is true, was Lawyer, Orator, and Statesman ; and yet he was more obliged to his Pen than his Pleadings (with an Exception to that on the Abdication) for those Distinctions, which gradually led him to the highest in the Power of the Crown to bestow on him.

Mr. *Locke* had tried his Hand in the Service of the *Excluders* for the Sake of Mankind, if not for his own : And tho' it must be allowed he was more a Philosopher than a Politician, it was not in the former of those Capacities, that he was honor'd with a Seat at the Board of Trade.

Davenant was not eminent in his own Walk of Civil Law, at least as a Pleader ; nor was he ever promoted in it : And yet, in Acknowledgement of his Powers as a political Writer, we find the Place of Inspector-General of the Customs created purposely for his Gratification ; because the Establishment, it seems, was even in those Days so full, that no Room could be made for him elsewhere.

Prior not only found Friends to applaud his Abilities, but also to reward them : *Sunderland*

was the *Erle Robert* he addressed his *Mice* to : So we are not to wonder, That he had a Seat in Parliament ; (There was then no *Qualification-Act.*) — That he was Secretary to the Embassay at *Ryswick*, and to that of *Lord Jersey* in *France* ; That, even when *Lord Manchester* was Ambassador-Resident there in the room of *Lord Jersey*, he was sent thither with a special Commission independent of him ; And that he was a *Lord of Trade*, long before he was a *Minister-Plenipotentiary* from *Great-Britain* to *Lewis XIV.*

Swift had a natural Claim to all that *Sir William Temple* could do for him ; had been personally known to King *William* ; and was introduced to *Lord Godolphin* by the elder *Craggs*, as a Man worth any Price or Preferment, without deriving any material Advantage from his surpassing Genius ; but having commenc'd Advocate for *Lord Oxford*, was rewarded with the *Deanery of St. Patricks* ; and the Times taking a new Turn soon after, he prefer'd the free Exercise of his Wit to every lucrative Consideration.

Addison and his *Advancement* hardly need be mentioned, the Instance is so notorious ; but every body may not so readily recollect, that his party-Services contributed more to it, than all his laudable Efforts to refine our Manners and perfect our Taste.

Nor

Nor was *Steel*, his Subordinate *, absolutely forgot ; as his Share in the Play-house Patent serves

* A Dialogue which passed between the Earl of S—— and this Gentleman, in or about the Year 1718, not being in Print that I know of, my Readers, I hope, will forgive me for inserting the Substance of it here.

Steel. I beg your Pardon, my Lord — Tho' such as you seldom remember, such as I seldom forget — And I must now beg leave to put you in mind of what you have told me over and over again — That you thought *Dick Steel* had almost as good Pretensions as *Bob Walpole* — That it was unpardonable in one who had been my right-hand Man at the Bar of the House, to turn his Back on me, when at the Head of the Treasury — And that when you came to be Minister all should be made up to me.

Lord S——. I did ; I did sure enough — But my dear Sir *Richard* —

Steel. My Lord — my Lord — I know what you would say ; and I will save you the Trouble of saying it — I am of the Millers Mind — The Fault is in the Mill — in more Senes than one.

Lord S——. What Mill ? I don't understand you.

Steel. Afford me a little Patience, my Lord, and I'll make you understand me — A poor Country-Fellow, coming too late on a *Saturday* Evening to the Mill with his Corn to be ground, found the Miller had shut up and was jogging home — This was a sorry Sight, as *Mackbeth* says — Bread for himself and Family for the next Week was the Point in Question : The Miller was a Churl, and not easy to be talk'd into any Thing — However, he did his best, scratch'd his Ears, told his Tale, and so far with Success, that he obtain'd the Custody of the Mill, with Leave to grind for himself ; on Condition, He did justice to the Crib, and paid the same Toll, as if the Miller had done the Job himself — The Fellow promis'd like any Minister, my Lord, and perform'd accordingly — For, going to the Till, with an honest Purpose, as he thought, to pay the Miller his due, he found such a Quantity of Grist lodg'd there already, that he could not resist the Temptation which assai'd him, to take twice as much away, as he had been injoin'd to add — But here

serves to bear witness: And I believe, were we to inspect the Records of the Treasury, we should find Proofs of his being farther consider'd in a more silent Way.

Even the great *Walpole* himself, like the great *Montagu*, Lord *Hallifax*, whom he succeeded, did not disdain to make his Approaches to Power by Writing as well as Speaking; and several of his Pieces are still extant in the Collections of Persons curious in these Matters.

And I will not specify the many, many dignified Names, in all Capacities, of Persons now living, who have either obtain'd those Digni-

the Parallel fails, my Lord. For, on his Return home, his Heart smote him—He could not sleep all Night—He could not eat all Day—And at last, he found himself under an irresistible Impulse to make Restitution—The Miller, in the mean time, having examin'd his Crib, and seeing him Approach with a Sack on his Back as before, took it for granted, he was come to repeat his Experiment, and resolv'd to give him a suitable Reception; but was not allowed Time enough—For the poor Penitent made all the Haste he could to confess the Fraud, and with Tears of Contrition discharg'd the Load at his Feet.—

—This melted the Miller into another Mood, and having paus'd upon the Matter a Moment or two, “Gum, gum, “ said he, tak hart, Mun! tak hart!—The Vaate's in “ the Mill—I do knau it is — Why Mun, I was as honest “ as the Day, when I com'd into it vurft—And now—Sha't “ ha' the Grift—sha't! For Mun, wur I to do as thee ha'it “ done, should not ha' a Bed to lye on,”

Lord S—. Ha, ha, ha! you were always a Wag, Sir *Richard*, ha, ha, ha!

Steel. To be serious then for once, my Lord — Knaves take care of themselves—and Fools are undone by relying on other Peoples Promises.

ties, or added signal Emoluments to them, by the Exercise of the Pen; for fear of shocking that Delicacy which renders them content with the Fruits of their former Labours, and desirous the Labours themselves should be forgot.

But *Thomas Gordon* is dead—And with *his*, as the * *last* of the lucky Names on this Roll, worth remembering, I shall close my List.

Gordon then, I have Reason to think, was not much richer, better recommended, or better ally'd, when Fortune first led him from *Scotland* to *London*, than many of his Cotemporaries: And what degree of Consideration he obtained from the Public, till he had *Trenchard* and *Collins* for his Supporters, is hardly worth ascertaining—But from that happy Period all went well with him: The Parts and Learning of the whole Junto were placed to his Account—As reputed *Author* of the *Independent Whig*, a Fortune not inconsiderable was left him, by a Country-Physician; being the only Retribution of the Kind, perhaps, that ever any *British* Author met with!—From *Cato's Letters*, *London-Journals*, *Anti-South-Sea Pamphlets*, he derived the Character of a writing Politician: And, what completed his Importance, *Trenchard*, dying, was not, fashionably, ashame'd to own him in

* Mr. *Wood*, so much to his Honour, distinguish'd by Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, is a Writer by Accident, not by Profession; and was already secur'd against any Reverse of Fortune, by the Gratitude and Generosity of former Friends.

his Will, but left him his Books together with a handsome Legacy; on which Recommendation, Sir *Robert Walpole* not only took him and his *Tacitus* at once into his Protection, but also found Means to put him on the Establishment as a Commissioner of the Wine-Licences; in the Possession of which Place he dy'd.

Did all Merit center in or die with *Gordon*? It cannot be affirmed or even suppos'd. *Arnal*, once his Friend, tho' afterwards his Enemy, was acknowledged to have quicker Parts and a more pliant Pen.—And yet, tho' prodigally rewarded for critical Services, he could never obtain a stated Provision.—So that, had he liv'd a few Years longer, he might have liv'd himself into all the Wretchedness, which *Amhurst*, his Antagonist, sunk under.

What is stranger still, he had not only the Minister but the M——ch too for his Patron; who condescended, more than once, to express a gracious Sense of his Merits and Services, and some Impatience, to have him suitably and permanently rewarded—So that we are bound to believe, that neither M——ch nor Minister, tho' seemingly all-sufficient, had any longer Power, separately or conjunctively, to do what they wished to do for him.—

The Heat of Opposition had, by this Time, not only increased the Price of Service, but so enlarged the Number of Claimants, that all was too

too little to satisfy their Cravings and Demands.

—*Hinc illæ Lachrymæ.*—

The Precedents then settled have been Laws ever since: And, were all our Ministers *Mæcenases*, and all our Authors such as *Augustus* himself would have been, proud of, *these* must have Seats before *those* can have a sufficient Pretence to gratify them with *Places*.

Dr. *Middleton*, so long and so deservedly admired, survived both *Arnal* and *Gordon*; and yet, tho' he had also the late Lord *Hervey* for his Godfather at Court, he remained unbeficed, till a Benefice was hardly worth his Acceptance: He had been formerly attach'd to, and an Advocate for Lord *Oxford*, when the Cry of the Times was strongest against him; and Prejudice in this Case, was as fatal as superior Interest in others.

Let no one, therefore, injuriously surmise, that our Authors are less worthy of Distinction, because they are no longer honour'd with it.— They are at least on a Par with the Times.— They certainly *write*, as well as our Heroes *perform*.— And God knows, this is so far from being a Boast, that one is ashamed to say so little, where there is Room to say so much.

But some (not Authors) are promoted not only without Seats, but without any Pretensions that can be *own'd*.— True.— I have known

known a Man promoted for having been a Bubble at Play.—I have known a Man promoted for having been a Sharper at Play.—And I have known a Third promoted for keeping a House for Play, in Defiance and Contempt of all the Laws extant against Play.

But then, if these Gentlemen worthy—— had not Seats in their own Right, they had a sufficient Ascendancy over such as had, and that amounts to the same Thing.

To be a Runner to the Runners of the Great, (Witness He who is able to lend his Thousands to Men of Quality, for Men of Quality there are, it seems, condescending enough, when the Furor of Play is upon them, to be so accommodated,) is better, than to be a Favorite to all the Muses:——And, whenever you have worked them up to such a Pitch, that they will make it a *Point* to serve you, sleep in Peace ! Your Business is done ! No Negative can be put upon you ! And 'tis no Matter whether you deserve to be posted at the *Altar* or at *Tyburn* !

What is more offensive and provoking still, as the Claims and Merits of Authors have been thus overborne on one hand, and the Credit and Value of Authorship sunk on the other, the Value of such other Professions, as have little or

or no Title to Credit at all, have been forc'd up as much above their natural Level.

Most shrewdly, says *Montesquieu*, of the human Hive of over-grown Size, and, consequently, overflowing with Vanity, Luxury, and Impropriety. "One general Mischief is " the Result: Those who are excellent in any " Profession will set their own Price on their " Skill: Those of the most trifling Talents " will rise in their Demands, accordingly; and " so all Proportion between Wants and Means " will be at an End."

But in this Case of ours, the trifling Talents alone are thus consider'd; and the more noble meet with little or no Consideration at all.

Not only the Regulars in vogue, for Example, but even Quacks of all Sorts down to Tooth-Drawers and Corn-Cutters, exact such Fees, as inable them to roll up and down the Town in their Equipages: And I don't despair of seeing the Time, when *French Friseurs*, *French Hawkers*, and other Strollers will do the same.

What is said of the Mustard-Seed is as true of Folly as of Faith: A single Seed thrown into the hot Bed of Fashion will produce an immeasurable Crop—All must have their *Fooleries* as well as their *Pinaries*; and the only Struggle

G seems

seems to be, whose Fruit shall be largest and most talk'd of.

I have known a Fidler in vogue, with his Fiddle carry'd before him by a Fellow out of Livery like himself, introduc'd to a Man of the first Quality, thro' a double Row of bowing Lackies, with as much Ceremony, as if he had been the Lord Keeper with his Purse—And as to THE MINGOTTI and her Effronteries, let the Meanness of Those who suffer'd her to vend them at such a Price a second Time, be recollect'd in her Justification !

When the Play-House is nam'd, I make it a Rule to pull off my Hat ; and think myself oblig'd to give the way to the lowest Implement belonging to it. He that has, or can get more Money than I, is, on the Principles of our *Qualification-Acts*, my Superior.

I am ready to make my best Acknowledgments to a *Harlequin*, who has Continence enough to look upon an Author in the Green-room, of what Consideration soever, without laughing in his Face.

Five Hundred Pounds a Year*, and a Benefit clear of all Deduction, is a Consideration

* The accomplish'd and idoliz'd Mrs. *Oldfield* had but twelve Guineas a Week, House-Pay ; which at 200 Nights to the Season amounted to 400 Guineas a Year ; out of which she also obliged herself to find her Comedy Clothes ; and Mrs. *Porter*, who lay under no such Obligation, had but ten.

that

that no first-rate Performer, Male or Female, will be content with; besides what can be levy'd, over and above, by occasional Trips to *Dublin*: So that in such exalted Company an Author has no Right to sit down——— And in case of any Competition, it is not easy to pronounce, what would be the Case of any *other* Man however born, however situated, or however meritorious for positive Service done the Public, under the Disparagement of *inferior* Pay.

Instead, therefore, of talking of the present *dignify'd* State of the Stage, I think we ought rather to talk of its *thriving* State: We have now one or two great Performers; and Time was, when we had a Constellation of such; when the Majesty as well as the Energy of Tragedy, the Grace as well as the Glee of Comedy, was display'd at full: And yet, at that Time, the nightly Charge of the House did not exceed forty-five Pounds; whereas it is now said to be Eighty.

To what a Size this Tympny is farther to grow, and what farther Degree of Importance it is to attain, who shall take upon him to pronounce?

The People of *Rome** inrag'd against *Au-gustus* on account of certain oppressive Laws by him

* This Passage is cited by *Montesquieu*, on the Authority of *Dio. Caff.* and, according to what may be collected from the

him imposed upon them, but more, for having banished *Pylades* the Comedian, were so infatuated, that they submitted to the former, for the sake of obtaining the Recal of the latter.

The Animosities occasion'd by the *Prasini* and *Veneti*, the *Greens* and *Blues* of the Circus, were of the most furious and often of the most sanguinary Kind: And when the same Factions descended with the Empire from *Rome* to *Constantinople*, they were at Times work'd up to such a Degree of Phrenzy, that they imbroil'd the Court, destroy'd the Peace of the City, indanger'd the very Person of the Emperor, and shoc'd the whole Empire.

concurring Evidence of the same Author, *Xiphilinus*, his Abridger, *Salust.* in *Vit. August.* and *Macrobius*, the Occasion of this important Incident was as follows: *Pylades*, full of himself and sure of a strong Party to espouse all he said or did, pointed contemptuously with his Finger from the Stage, to a Citizen who took the liberty of the Theatre to hiss him. This was suitably resented: The Audience divided: Part declared for the Player, Part for the Citizen: A Sedition infused: The Pretor interpos'd; and on the Behalf of the Citizen brought the Cause before *Augustus*: *Augustus* also, taking the same Side, (which then appear'd to be the strongest,) not only reprimanded *Pylades*, but, as it should seem, reflected on the Stage itself, as having a strong Tendency to disturb as well as to amuse the People: *Pylades*, on the other hand, more shrewdly than modestly, reply'd, “ *Tis for your Interest, Cæsar, they should be amused any Way.* ” Banishment infused: His Decree at Court only serv'd to increase Faction, and, consequently, his Importance every where else; insomuch, that the City was never at Peace, till he was recall'd, on the ignominious Terms specify'd above.

And, according to all Appearances, are not we in a fair Way of running Theatre-mad too? Are not we already so dazzled and bewitched with its Charms, as to become our own Dupes in every Thing belonging to it? Have not the rival Pretensions of any two Things a Degree above Candle-Snuffers, thrown our Audiences into Uproar and Confusion? Have not we already transferr'd the Merit of the Composer to the Performer? Have not we gone farther still, and suppos'd the Merit of the personated Character to adhere to the real? Are we not on the Point of giving them Place and Precedency in all Companies accordingly? And is it not within the Reach of Possibility, that they may come to have a like Ascendancy every where?

We laugh at *Indians* and *Negroes* for setting a supreme Value on Things intrinsically worth nothing: And yet how small is the Difference between us?

We suffer Opinion to take the Place of Judgment—We suffer the lightest of the Species, who, like Straws and Feathers, happen, for that very Reason, to be uppermost, to govern our Opinions; and we wear the Cap and Bells of the Day, with as much Pride and Pleasure, as the old *Romans* wore their civic, mural, naval, and triumphal Crowns.

In short ; Tho' we talk of Soul and Body, we have but one Object ; because the Soul is no Object at all—Hence Cooks, Taylors, Jewellers, Pimps, Flatterers, &c. &c. are always in request—Lawyers, Physicians, and Divines but when they are wanted—And Authors, or Dealers in Helps to improve and delight the Understanding, never.

The Understanding is, indeed, the only Part of a human Creature, that these Creatures can subsist without : And the Creator has made them accordingly.—

Conceit supplies the Defect—And it seems, they are as happy as if they were ever so wise.

Whether it was always so, is a Question I have discuss'd elsewhere.

So much as this, however, lies on the Surface : That which is called original Sin by some, by some Defect of Nature, and by others a Principle of Perverseness, left in the human Composition, like Sterility in the Soil, purposely for Man to exercise his Wits and Virtues upon, is always fermenting so strongly, and operating so busily and subtilly, that all the Wisdom and all the Power of Government must be incessantly employ'd, to restrain it from pervading and viatating the whole Mass.

Restrain'd

Restrain'd we know it may be, by Maxims, Laws and Habits ; and in virtue of such Restraint, the Exterior of Things at least might be render'd plausible, whether the Contents were rectify'd or otherwise : Authority would then be the Concomitant of Power ; Respect would wait upon Authority ; and Individuals no longer have Reason to blush for one another.

Suspend, or remove this Restraint ; Order is immediately inverted ; the worst Principles predominate ; the best subside ; and such a System obtains, as makes Men frantic enough to wish for a political Chaos : As if Hope and Help could be found only in the Midst of Despair and Destruction.

As Things should be, I apprehend the Scale or Climax should be thus : Labour, Money, Ingenuity, Knowledge, Wisdom, Honour, Virtue, Piety, public Spirit or Magnanimity.

As they are, Money, however acquir'd, is at the Summit, and public Spirit under foot.

And this brings me to our *Qualification-Acts*, more than once touch'd upon already, which have a manifest Tendency to authorise the Inversion here complain'd of.

A Freehold of 40*s.* a Year (once an annual Competence for a reputable Family, now less than a Quarters Wages for a hireling Servant) qualifies any Lout to vote for Knights of the Shire: A Freehold or Copy-hold of 300*l.* a Year, to represent a City or a Borough; of 600*l.* to represent a County; and of 100*l.* in *Middlesex*, and 200*l.* in any other County on this Side of the *Tweed*, to be a County-Justice.

Thus it is here suppos'd, that Wealth is both a Preservative against any Lapse and also a Succedaneum for every parliamentary and judicial Requisite: So sanctify'd, therefore, it could not but be ador'd: And as it soon came to be observ'd, that the Possession of it, like the Possession of the Crown, freed the Possessor from all Imputation whatsoever, it is scarce to be wonder'd, that Men became every Thing, in order to become rich.

Our Ancestors, it seems, were not aware, That Want was a Sea without Shore; a Void not to be fill'd; an Evil not to be guarded against; That the Wants of Wantonness were abundantly more devouring and insatiable than the Wants of Necessity; That the Wants most to be apprehended were the Wants of Principle and of Shame; and that, in providing by such an Expedient as this, to keep out Corruption and

Pro-

Prostitution, they only provided to raise the Prices of them *500 per Cent.* to their Posterity.

It never occur'd to them as possible, That in the Year — between 50 and 60,000*l.* after the Rate of 400*l.* a Vote, should be given, in the Face of the Sun, for the Perpetuity of a paltry Borough ; in annual Rent not worth 130*l.* — Or that any one Individual should be so unsizably opulent, as to part with such a Sum, almost without missing it, after he had just parted with such another, in a Contest for half a Borough only.

These are Facts : And, if Inference has fair Play, we shall have no need to compare what has happen'd *since* these Restraints on the *Freedom* of Elections were enacted, with what was *then* believ'd ; or to confront the present Times with the noble Example of *Andrew Marvel*, twenty Years successively, Member for *Kingston upon Hull* ; an Author, and the last meritorious Pensioner upon Record to his own Constituents !

But, as Borough-Practice, in becoming thus universal, may also become as troublesome upwards, as pernicious downwards, I hope I may have Leave, in this Place, to revive the Memory of two other Acts, which have been long suffered to fall into Disuse : Namely, Those of 1 *Hen. V.* Cap. 1. and of 23 *Hen. VI.* Cap. 15. By which, Provision is made, “ That the Citi-

“ zens and Burgeffes of the Cities and Boroughs
 “ be chosen of Men, Citizens, and Burghers,
 “ *resiant* and *dwelling*, and *free* IN the *same*
 “ Cities and Boroughs, and no otherwise.”

“ And now (to resume the Subject more immediately before us) having touch'd on the Over-Rates which the petty Professions have exacted, and which the Public has rather too easily and indolently submitted to, 'tis impossible not to lift up our Eyes to Queen *Rbetic*, inthron'd as she fits on the Summit of Things, and with all her Sister-Sciences bowing like *Josephs* Sheaves before her—

Not to dispute her Title.

That might not be modest ; certainly not discreet : The Logician was no Fool, who chose to excuse himself from disputing with *Adrian*, because he was Lord of so many Legions.

Nor yet to grovel like a Reptile at her Footstool.

The Pen has apparently some Advantage over the Tongue ; the permanent Writing over the fugitive Speech: In the Study, there is Time to compose consistently, to prune carefully, and to finish accurately : He that writes is a Sort of Actor in the World as long as his Works continue to be read : He entertains, he informs, he advises ; and at once perpetuates the Fame of his Abilities, and the Use of them.

Whereas

Whereas the Orator of the Day, the Session, the Parliament, or the Reign has hitherto left little more than a splendid Name behind him : His Victories, his Triumphs, his Trophies in the Day of Debate, are honorably mentioned.—But on what Principle they were obtained, what material Informations they communicated, or Advantage, except to himself, they produced, has, in general, been Matter of much Uncertainty.

Demosthenes and *Cicero* did, indeed, take sufficient Care to convince Posterity, that they deserved (the former by his Abilities if not by his Virtues, and the latter by both,) all the Honours they received from the several Communities they serv'd.

But, so negligent of Glory have their Followers amongst us been, or so satisfied with the Figure their Names made in the *Court-Kalendar*, that 'tis Matter of doubt, whether one in twenty of the Speeches, ascribed to them in our Collections, be genuine ; and Matter of wonder, That so little is to be found upon Record, to warrant the high Opinion entertained of their Efficiency and Importance.

Lord *Shaftsbury*, the Author, as if in Contempt of Lord *Shaftsbury* the Orator, is pleas'd to talk of verbal Fluency, * as a *Disease*, which he calls the † *Leprosy of Eloquence* ; and, having ac-

* Advice to an Author. Part I. p. 160, 167.

† This and what follows concerning Oratory, is recommended to the Consideration of that great Professor Mr. *Sheridan*.

cus'd those who valued themselves upon it, of abounding more in *Froth* than *Matter*, is hardy enough, to express himself as follows ; " And " when they would — rise to the Capacity of " Authors, the Case grows worse with them ; " Their Page can carry none of the Advantages of " their Person. They can no Way bring into Pa- " per those Airs they give themselves in Discourse. " The Turns of Thought and Action with which " they help out many a lame Thought and inco- " herent Sentence must here be laid aside, and the " Speech taken to pieces, compared together " and examined from Head to Foot : So that " unless the Party has been used to play the Cri- " tic thoroughly upon himself, he will hardly " be found Proof against the Criticisms of " others."

Dr. *Davenant* also takes frequent Opportunities, to complain of the public Talkers who had been suffered to take the Lead in his Time ; and to inculcate, That in the Steerage of a State Strength of Head and Uprightness of Heart, were of infinitely more Use than all the Plausibilities and Varieties, that Sounds and Words were capable of.

" Both Prince and People, says he, are very " unfortunate, who much depend on those " whose chief Talent is the Art of Speaking. " Oliver, Charles Cardinal of Lorrain, Pom- " pone de Belbievre, Cardinal Ximenes, the Duke " of Sully, Wolsey, Sir Thomas Moore, the Ce- " cils

"cils, Treasurer *Buckhurst*, Secretary *Walpingham*, the Cardinals *Richlieu* and *Mazarine*, Secretary *Thurloe*, *Cornelius de Witt*, and the Treasurer *Southampton*, with several others who may be reckon'd, were not recommended and did not subsist by this single Gift and Faculty, but shined with many Excellencies and had many Endowments, which enabled them to handle wisely the Affairs of State in their Time, and rendered their Ministry so successful."

And Others, again, have even adventured to condemn the whole Practice of Oratory, to represent it as rather meretricious than meritorious, as a Trick to inflame the Passions, rather than a necessary Power to command the Reason of Mankind, rather a Jack o' Lanthorn, to allure and mislead wandering Imaginations, than a Star to conduct the Wise to a Saviour: And from thence have made bold to infer, That in a plain, home-spun Assembly, fit to represent the common Sense of a Community, debating, not haranguing ought to be the Order of the Day; That the shortest Way to investigate and establish Truth, ought to be the only Way in Use: And that ornamenting as well as disguising it, ought to be alike exploded.

Nay; Dr. *Davenant*, speaking of the short Duration of *Solons* System, farther adds, "That tho' he had fortified it with all possible Foresight and humane Prudence, yet there was something rooted in the very Nature of the

" *Athenians* that must eternally hinder them
 " from remaining long under one Establishment;
 " which was, That in the most important Junc-
 " tures, and in the nicest Business, they might,
 " at all Times, be blown away by the Breath of
 " Orators; that in their Councils they might be
 " guided, ruled, and managed by Eloquence;
 " That they seldom lik'd a Man so much for do-
 " ing well, as for speaking finely, which is in-
 " deed the Vice of most States whose Affairs
 " are governed by popular Assemblies, &c."
 And again, afterwards, more compendiously,
 " Whoever looks over with Care the History of
 " those Times will plainly see, that the Li-
 " berty of *Athens* was subverted by their Ora-
 " tors."

But Authors are no more qualified to be
 Judges in their own Cause than other People: And
 These, great as they were, when secluded from
 the World, might possibly find themselves inca-
 pable, not only of declaiming, but even of
 thinking in public: *Davenant*, in a Manner
 owns this to have been his Case: In *Addison*
 it was notoriously so: And, such is generally
 the Narrowness of our Minds, that we know
 not how to pardon the Excellencies we cannot
 attain.

Some Allowance in Abatement, therefore, must
 be made on the Head of Prejudice: And for my
 own Part, (if the Opinion of such an Insignificant
 as I am, may be worth delivering) I am free to ac-
 knowledge

knowledge, That, in the Use and Application of Abilities, Time, Place, and Circumstance, may more than double their original Value.

At the *Robin-Hood*, in a *Vestry*, or *Corporation-Meeting*, all the Flowers of the Rhetoricians Field may not be worth stooping for, or attending to.

Truth, indeed, is every where and on all Occasions Truth ; but when trifling in its Nature and Import, cannot, by any kind of Garniture, be made otherwise : And even Speculations on the most interesting Subjects are but Speculations at last.

Thus the best Book of Politics that ever was composed, from *Aristotles* down to *Montesquieus*, is worth little more than the Engine of *Archimedes*, with which he boasted to move the World, if he could find a Place of Purchase for it : Such Books are read every where : They are applied no where : And so, in effect, What was calculated to serve Mankind, serves only to amuse them.

But Places and Times there are, where every Question that is agitated, fundamentally regards whatever is dear to rational Beings, either as associated, or as Individuals ; their Property, Liberty, Importance, Renown, Security and Prosperity.

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Here, therefore, a Moment's Eloquence, (if Eloquence has really that irresistible Power, we are told it has) may be worth an Age of Study—And the Proof of Ascendency ought to be the Rule of Importance.

The Art of managing such an Assembly, so constituted, tempered and divided, and of finding such a Medium for every Object as should answer to all Eyes alike, does, indeed, imply a Superiority of Genius ; and we shall be forc'd to acknowledge, That the Master of such an Art was born for Pre-eminence ; or, at least that no body could dispute the Ground with him, but the Man of inexhaustible Expedient in the Closet, and he that is Master of himself and every body else in the Field.

But then his Eloquence would be the least of his Accomplishments: There are Haberdashers of small Wares in all Professions : There is a petty Orator as well as a petty Author : And against such only, all that is said against Eloquence, can be levell'd : We all of us remember a certain political Automaton, that, being once wound up, could go off for any Time required ; that had the Dictionary at Command ; could ring all the Changes Words were capable of ; all pretty, all plausible ; could amuse, suspend, captivate ; do all, but convince ; and when his Hour was out, the Wonder was, what it had been fill'd with.

If mere Fluency of Tongue, therefore, had been the great Requisite to form a State-Pilot, this Man had succeeded to the Administration, instead of being super-annuated with a lucrative Sine-Cure.

In short, good Organs are good Things, but good Parts are better: Nor will even good Parts answer as they ought (whatever our fine Gentlemen may think, who live by the Day) without proper Culture: To know, we must apply: Knowledge acquired by Memory and Reflection, must be mellowed into Use by Practice and Experience: Books are but Copies: The World is the Original: And no Lights can serve us so well as Those acquir'd by our selves.

If then we have a Man amongst us, thus qualified for the Service, I had like to have said the Salvation, of the Public; with radical Knowledge, speculative and experimental, familiar Reference to every Branch of it, facil Communication, firm in Principle, great in Sentiment, noble in Purpose, determined in Execution, equally free from Diffidence and Presumption, equally incapable of Surprise and Dismay, Meanness or Perfidy, and equally Master of all the Powers of Argumentation, Imagination and Elocution, we must again admit, he can have no Competitor but such a Minister as *Sully*, or such a Hero, as He that is now the Wonder of *Europe*; and all our Writers ought to be proud of laying their Pens at his Feet.

I

But

But, when all has been allowed to Place, Time, apparent Efficiency, &c. which ought to be allowed, the *Author*, it is humbly hop'd, may put in for *some* Degree of Consideration *somewhere*: And, if Fidlers, Singers, Dancers, Tumblers, Players, Mimics, Quacks, Hawkers and Pedlars, &c. must, of Necessity, continue to be better *paid*, let him, at least, have all the Justice done him and Favour shewn him, that the present untoward Bias of Things will admit of.—As the Case stands, he is laugh'd at if poor; if, to avoid that Curse, he endeavours to turn his Wit to Profit, he is branded as a Mercenary.—If again he should have the good Luck to find a lucrative Market for his Works, Pirates supplant him: His Property may be worth taking, though not worth defending: *Magazines*, *Chronicles*, &c. may retale him.—Coffee-Houses subscribe for him.—Circulating Libraries subsist by lending him:—So that he may be read every where, rewarded no where; and, as it was said of *Butler* and his Bust, having ask'd for Bread, he may be put off with a Stone.—A Stone pretending to do him honor, but, in reality, rais'd only, that his posthumous Patron may quarter his own frail Pretensions on his more substantial, and, therefore, more durable Merit!

A late noble Lord, as eminent for his Virtues as his Accomplishments, (which, by the way, were

were both forgotten almost before his Ashes were cold) would never allow any Proposition to be conclusive, as long as any one, *What then?* lay against it: And were I, at the Foot of the last Paragraph, to subjoin, *This is a Brief of the Authors Case*, I should not wonder to have all Inferences parry'd in the same Manner.

A Man, determined not to be mov'd, shuts his Eyes as well as his Heart against all the Approaches of Compassion: And he that, like another noble Lord, drives every Author from his Door, as if he came to inspect his Character and Conduct, will, by Advance, renounce all Concern for the whole Tribe.

And so let him!—I am neither an *Amphion* or an *Orpheus*—Nor are the Stocks, Stones, and Brutes of the present Time to be humanized, by any Species of Incantation in my Power to practise upon them.

I throw my Bread upon the Waters, without any Hopes of finding it after many Days.

There was, not many Years ago, a Society for the Encouragement of Learning, who rais'd a Fund, hir'd a House, employ'd a Secretary, and undertook to furnish Paper and Print to Authors, on Condition of being re-imburs'd out of the Sale of the Work.

I do not expect to see such another — Their Plan was too narrow, — They also forgot, that the Booksellers were Masters of all the Avenues to every Market, and, by the Practice of one Nights Postage, could make any Work resemble *Jonahs Gourd* after the Worm had smote it: It miscarried, consequently: And in general, our Countrymen are as little able to undertake a good Work *twice*, as our Enemies the *French*, to make a second Effort in the Field.

There is, however, no Harm in making out a *Title* and entering a *Claim*: And I undertake no more.

“ Authors at large, (says Lord *Shaftsbury*,) are in a Manner profess’d Masters of Understanding to the Age.” It has already been urg’d, That such among them, as have the Knowledge, Prudence, Probity, and Spirit requisite to so high a Calling, are an Ornament to the State they belong to: And in *Churchills Collection of Voyages*, an *Italian Traveller*, one *Gemelli*, gives all *Europe* to understand, That he could find nothing amongst us but our Writings, to distinguish us from the worst of *Barbarians*.

Instead of reproaching Authors, therefore, for living by their Labours, we ought to repreh

proach ourselves for allowing them no other Means to live.

The Expedient of exalting them so high in the Regions of Speculation, that they should be above all worldly Inducements, and of paying them, therefore, with *Praise*, was a subtle one at least: But This of decrying and undervaluing them, for descending to do as *other Folks* do, is as coarse as tis cruel.

In a Court of Criticism impeach him and welcome for his Faults and his Follies! In his Majestys Courts do the same, for any Offence against the Laws! Or in the Court of Common-Sense for writing at all! But even in the Court of Conscience itself, absolve him, as you ought to do, for trusting as little as possible to the Gratitude and Generosity of an insensible Age!

The Engravers, and Print-Sellers, are oblig'd to the good Sense and good Offices of Mr. *Hogarth*, for an Act of Parliament, which made the *Devices* of their Plates their own, as well as the Plates themselves: Till then it was worth no Mans while to be either ingenious or industrious: For what one invented, another stole: But from that Period no Country in *Europe* has been more fertile in excellent Productions. And the Inference is obvious: Authors are still in the same Predicament; are still treated in the same Manner; and a like Provision in their Favour would,

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in all Probability, be attended with the like Success.

Should it be ask'd, Who will be their Solicitor? I have no Answer to make.—But then, I will adventure to surmise, That if there is any one Politician in either H— such a Bill will not want a Patron.

And now, having already reviv'd the Memory of the departed Society for the *Inencouragement of Learning*, I hope the Society for *incouraging Arts and Sciences*, or *Præmium Society*, still subsisting, will forgive me, for taking the liberty to offer a Hint to them, which they will see rises naturally out of my Subject.

They are in Possession of a large and growing Fund, professedly devoted to the Service of the Community: And, as it has been shewn, that no Species of ingenious Men, deserve better of the Community, or can be us'd worse than Authors, suppose They were to take Literary Productions into their Plan, and, by way of Supplement to the scanty Earnings of those Gentlemen, annually to beslow a Course of Gratifications * on

* If those worthy Gentlemen could also be prevail'd upon to do as much for History and Landscape Painters (whose Profits bear as little Proportion to those of their younger Brethren the Portrait-Men, as the Authors to the Players,) their Plan would be so much the more perfect, and the Public would, consequently, entertain a higher Opinion of it: There being something apparently absurd, in giving Rewards to increase the Number of Adventurers, and making no Effort to open a Market for them, after they are become Masters.

such

such as had contributed most to the Honour and Service of their Country: Under this express Restriction, That whosoever became his own Advocate and troubled them with an Application on his own Behalf, should be, *ipso facto*, disqualify'd from receiving any Favour whatsoever.

Suppose farther, that, by way of Provision against the Partialities which all Men are subject to, the Managers of the two Theatres should be prevail'd upon, either by the Interposition of the *Pit*, or the superior Authority of an *additional Clause* to the *Licence-Act*, to transfer so much of their Power as regards the Acceptance or Rejection of Dramatical Pieces, to a select Committee of the said Society.

They would, in such Case, be exonerated of an Office equally troublesome and invidious; and, by the Interposition of some such neutral Principle, a ready Way for the future might be open'd to every Man of Genius in that Province, to derive to himself, as before hinted, what Share of Advantage his Share of Merit should intitle him to.

Audire jubet vos IMPERATOR HISTRICUS—
(*Plaut. Prolog. Pænuli*) is a Dictate we ought to be ashamed of submitting to from the Stage any longer: And the Expedient before us, might be so improv'd, as to answer exactly, in Use and Purpose, to the Institution alluded to in

the

the following Lines of the same Prologue from whence that Dictate is taken.

*Quodque ad Ludorum Curatores attinet,
Ne palma detur quoiquam artifici injuria,
Neve ambitionis causa extrudantur foras,
Quo deteriores anteponantur bonis.*

—The Reader, I hope, will do me the justice to observe, that I proceed, as the late Orator *Henley* would have said, by *Supposition*, not *Proposition*.

There is but one Character that I can recollect which ranks at present below an Author, and that is a *Schemer*—A Caveat on that Head, therefore, must not be thought impertinent.

And I have, besides, another *Supposition* to offer, which, being out of all Comparison, more comprehensive, and more important, will stand in need of infinitely more Indulgence, than all the rest.

It has been already hinted and in part prov'd, that the *Distributive* of this Country is but nominally either in the Cr—n, or its M——rs: And that, consequently, we have all been wrong, in placing the manifold Inversions and Perversions, complain'd of, to their Account.

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The Truth of the Matter is, that we have a many-headed Intruder amongst us, call'd P—y In—t, which, by the irresistible Power of two magical Monosyllables, has subdued all Things to himself.

It is he, (I speak it with Fear and Trembling, as having the terrifying Case of Mr. —— * ever before my Eyes) it is he, that, with polluted and violent Hands, has taken Merit, Service, and Suffering out of the public Scale ; and has so over-loaded it with *Selfishness*, that it has kick'd the Beam.

Seeing, therefore, that, for Want of proper Stimulatives, Men think by Halves, write by Halves, fight by Halves, do every Thing by Halves, without any Sense of Glory, Dread of Shame, or Regard for any public Consideration whatsoever, suppose our most gracious S—— was restor'd to his Prerogative, his M——rs to their full Freedom of acting according to Conscience, and the People to the full Benefit of the immense Supplies, they annually give for annual Disappointments.

* Who might have truly said after the Poet ;

I cannot make this Iron-Knee,
Bend to a meaner Power than that which form'd it,
FREE. WATTS.

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And

And if in all this I talk like a Man beside myself—tis no Wonder—Fear in Excess, confounds both Understanding and Purpose: And, having the said Mr. —— and the Lodging provided for him still before my Eyes, I am so lost in Apprehension, that I derive no Comfort even from the *printed* Votes of the House of Lords in the great Case of the *Aylsbury*-Men, tho' *printed* expresly for the Comfort of the whole Nation; or even from *Magna Charta* it self.

I am, however, inclin'd to think, if in a Capacity to think at all, That the Effect of such an Operation would nearly resemble, that resulting from the Rectification of a Ships Ballast, when, by an equal Mixture of Miscarriage and Misfortune, it has shifted all to one Side—The Hull would from thenceforward obey the Rudder, the Masts and Yards would not only hold their Place, but also recover their Use, the Rigging would be clear, the Sails at Command, and the Crew both at Leisure and in Heart to do their Duty as they ought.

Hitherto, I must own, my Clients have been more dispos'd, either by the Occurrences of the Times, or their own Misconceptions of them, to deal in Invective than Panegyric: And thereby, have, now and then, excited a Disposition somewhat resembling that of *Caligula* to the People

People of *Rome*; namely; To wish, There was no such Engine as the Press, no such Thing as Writing, no Provision by Record for the Information of Poslerity: In short, That the Body of Authors had but one Neck, and that Privilege might be pleaded, to take it off at a Blow.—

Whether right or wrong, I shall not stay to inquire: I am not an Advocate for their Excesses: They have their Passions, their Follies and their Vices as well as other Men: Liberty may be as much abus'd as Power: And that which is call'd Zeal for the Public, may only be a Discharge of factious Malignity: The Emissaries of *France* and *Rome* can use any Language, and set up any Standard whatsoever: Popular Clamour may be excited for very unpopular Purposes; and the Seditions now, or of late, raging amongst us, are sufficient to shew, That no one Grievance was ever yet remov'd by the Interposition of another.

What *Montesquieu* says of the *Etolians*, That they corrected their Follies by their Follies *, contains a Lesson of no small Importance to us; and I wish with all my Soul, we were directed to make a right Use of it, in all that concerns us.

There is a middle Point in this Case as in all others. A right Center will make a right Circumference. And there is no need to shew, either,

* *Confid. de la Grand. des Rom.* p. 50.

That those who reward may punish ; or That those who never reward will rarely be serv'd twice.

In a free State, where Men have the free Use of their Understandings, the Understandings of Men ought to be reckon'd into the common Stock, as well as their Hands and their Purses : And tis as much for the Honour of a Minister to apply the Knowledge offer'd by others, as to supply the whole Stock himself.

If there was a *Combination* against *Hercules*, a military Combination more especially, of all others the most formidable ! *Hercules* himself would stand in need of Auxiliaries ; consequently should open his Gates and his Arms too, to all that profess'd the same Cause and were capable of assisting in it. We read in the Fables of one *Lion*, made frantic by a *Gnat* ; and of another set free from a Snare by a *Mouse*.

To bespeak so much additional Service is certainly more eligible, than to provoke so much additional Obstruction : And, were I to insert in this Place, as much of the political History of the Press, as hath actually pass'd under our own Eyes, this would be obvious to the meanest Capacity.—

I could subjoin a great deal more, not altogether unworthy Consideration ; I could inlarge on the Hint above thrown out, That the Press hitherto, thro' Necessity, a Prostitute, might be render'd a Vestal, and might be employ'd like one, to keep the sacred Fire of Patriotism from Extinction.—I could shew, that
tho'

tho' Popularity, and Power are at present united, nothing can be more precarious than their Union.—That Power itself is thought by some to be still in a fluctuating Situation—That tis not given to every Man to foresee where it will settle at last—That Expedient, having been kept on the Stretch so long, is in a Manner worn out—That there is no Stability in the Attachment resulting from mere Hope and Expectation—That Delay and Disappointment set them on the Fret—That when Suspence is over, Fermentation begins—That Fermentation if moderate is insufficient, if violent may burst a rotten Vessel to Pieces—That the Commonwealth is sick of many Griefs, all preying on its Vitals, and surrounded with many Dangers all imminent—That, if the Means of Preservation are not seasonably offer'd from above, they will be contended for below—That when the Ship is sinking the Law of Precedency gives way to That of Self-Preservation; and a Voice from the Hold itself, advising what is suitable to the Exigence, will inforce Attention and Observation—That in what is called *Middle-Life* Individuals are to be found in every Market-Town, as well as in every City of *Britain*, of Ability, Sentiment, Character and Opulence; and Numbers in this Metropolis, who want nothing but Knowledge of, and Confidence in, one another, to render the Community capable of advising for itself—That a Sheet of Paper might be made to hold all that is necessary to attract and consolidate them—That once united in a Body that Body

Body might serve as the ancient *Saxon* Wittenage mot (or as it is writ by *Bacon* upon *Selden Wittagenmote*,) did, to represent the Wisdom, Vigour and Virtue of their Country, till it can be better represented some other Way—That they might throw in their Weight where it was most wanted or best deserv'd.—And that by the Means of the Press, they might draw all the Powers and Faculties, which in their separate State only flash out by Fits and expire, to such a Focus, as might effectuate all that Law would permit or Reason require.—

But this is beyond my present Purpose: And, if, in Contradiction to what I have thus said, *en passant*, concerning a more inlarg'd Use of the *Press*, it should be urg'd, That all the Good which can be obtain'd by it, is already obtain'd by the Dint of *Adventure*, can the Public, after what has been said, condescend to avail themselves of the Crop, without once interposing, in any Shape, to procure a suitable Consideration for the Plough?

Surely they cannot be so insensible—And if it should be farther urg'd, —That, in case the Service is ingrateful, Authors were not press'd into it: That they might have seen the Gulph, if they would have us'd their Eyes, before they leapt into it; and that, consequently, they have more Reason to blush for their Folly, than to value them-

themselves on their Parts ; or to complain of their Disappointments.

And this is the Charge against Authors before alluded to, in the Court of Common Sense—But, whatever may be said of other Men, Authors do not come as wise into the World, as they go out of it—Raw from the Schools, esteeming *Virgil* a far greater Man than *Augustus*, *Cæsar* the Writer than *Cæsar* the Dictator, and eager to inrol themselves on the same List, in Hope to be confider'd accordingly, they write, are flatter'd by their Friends ; publish and are undone—Undone good and bad alike—These with Contempt, Those with Neglect ; which is all the Difference between them.

Were Authors to consider Times as other Manufacturers do, they would act as reasonably—But then they would not be Authors—Pride and Pleasure in their first Sallies not only serve them instead of Profit, but render them as deaf to all other Considerations, as the desperate Sailor, who, because he had seen others do so before him, jump'd from the Main-yard into the Sea, crying, “ By G—, I can't swim—But “ no Matter !—Some Body or other will save “ me.—”

Infatuation ! Phrenzy !—Be it so!—By the Statute of modern Uniformity, Luxury is the Idol that all worship—There is a Luxury of

of the Mind as well as of the Senses—Of Those who administer to the latter, Authors stand the foremost—And ought we to reproach them for the Exercise of those Talents which we are so much oblig'd to, for inlarging the Bounds of our Happiness?

The Times, as we have seen, were favorable to *Prior, Addison, &c.* (tho' all found Occasion to complain before they were serv'd) because the Link of Patronage which held the Great and the Learned together, was then in full Force: And yet they did not commence Writers in virtue of any such Foresight; but because it was the Impulse of their Genius: And all of Good that befel them upon it, was as much the Gift of Fortune as the Result of Merit.

The next Race of Writers had *their* recent Examples for Authority; and, so far, could better justify themselves for taking to the Pen and the Press, on a Principle of Discretion, than, in this Country, any other Set of Writers ever could.

We of the present Day, indeed, having nothing but Phantoms before our Eyes; are only the Dupes of our own Delusions—But then alas! We *are* Writers; consequently incapable of taking up any other Trade; and consequently, instead of Examples, can only bequeath our Advices and Warnings to others.

And,

And, if Advice had any Power to convince or Warnings to deter, the Glut of Writing which has cloy'd the present Age, should be follow'd, like *Pharoahs* Years of Abundance, with a Dearth as durable.

Were only the *Journals*, *Chronicles*, *Magazines*, and other periodical, as well as occasional, Productions, (which, at present, contribute so much to the Amusement and Chit-Chat of the Day,) to be discontinued all at once, how doubly loaded with all the Horrors of Vacancy would every Hour limp off? And how little would the common Run of Society be worth?

Knowledge is the Light of the World: Authors have been the Dispensers of it: And have been suffered to consume themselves in the Operation.

Let those that now write, therefore, be the last! And those that delight in Darkness have it!

And here, having so far manifested my Esteem of, and Concern for, my Cotemporaries, I find myself under some Temptation, to drop a Caution or two, which might not be altogether unserviceable to them:—But then, having been taught by Lord *Sbaftsbury*, how dangerous it is, to hold the Fescue to Those who hold

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the Fescue to others, I shall do my best to render my Trespass as pardonable as possible.

Every Man has something of the Coxcomb about him; and, according to the Degree of Eminence he possesses or aspires to, this pragmatical Principle is apt to be more and more apparent—To say I have my Share of it, as well as other People, is to say nothing perhaps—If, like the cloven Hoof, it cannot be conceal'd, it would be a Vanity to attempt it—But then tis nevertheless true, that I have endeavour'd to extinguish it: And I heartily wish Others may do the same with better Success—At Times also, I suspect myself of being too sore, too sensible, too captious, too presuming, &c. and while I am in that Humour, I am as alert with my Pen as a Wasp with his Sting—But then I am both sorry and ashame'd of it when the telly Fit is over—And if any Sally of this Kind has escaped me in this Treatise, I take Shame to myself, by these Presents, for it.

Above all Things, however, I am careful, not to authorise the Malignancy gone forth against us all, by any wanton Display of my own—In controversy, more especially, whenever so unfortunate as to be ingag'd in one, it is become my Study to preserve my Temper that I may have the fewer Faults to answer for; and to be always just, tho' sometimes oblig'd to be severe

severe—The Grace of Candour being as captivating as the Power of Reason is convincing.

And this leads me to recollect, with Concern, That, not long since, the Few who have any Regard left for Men of Letters, or Attention to their Performances, were shock'd, in seeing several of them employ'd like Cocks in a Battle-Royal.—Or, at least, like so many Sea-Boys, order'd to lash one another round the Mast, for the Entertainment of the Quarter-Deck—And hardly a Season passes un-stigmatiz'd, with some Folly of the same Kind.

Consider! What each of us gains this Way is a Loss to the whole—And that the Republic of Letters can no more consist of Freebooters and Bravoes than any other Republic.

Of all Mankind, shall you be the last to find out the Force and Benefit of Combinations?

Combine! And perhaps you would need neither Patrons nor Establishments!

Combine, and you might out-combine the very Booksellers themselves!

But if this is impracticable,—if the Iron-Crop of *Cadmus* from the Dragons Teeth, was to prefigure the unavoidable Broils of the Tribe he furnish'd with Arms, as also their merciless Assassinations

saffinations of each other, recollect at least, that the Pen is compos'd of Feather as well as Point; — That the *Dolce-picante* is of all Mixtures the most grateful to every Taste: — And learn, even of the two Dwarfs in the Pantomime, never to meet or part, without a proper Exchange of Acknowledgments and Civilities.

F I N I S.



